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Uproar Over Tale of CIA-Viet 'Atrocities'

Herald Tribune News Service

WASHINGTON—The CIA and State Department were thrown into an uproar yesterday when a news dispatch reported Sen. Stephen M. Young as saying he had been told the Central Intelligence Agency had committed atrocities in Vietnam to discredit the Viet Cong.

But the 76 year old Ohio Democrat told the Herald Tribune News Service "I did not say that."

His earlier purported statement elicited an immediate denial from the usually silent CIA—"absolutely false," a spokesman protested—and

anguish among State Department officials who feared his reported remarks would have disastrous repercussions abroad.

THOSE REACTIONS stemmed from a news agency dispatch quoting Young as saying a CIA agent in Vietnam told him the CIA committed atrocities there to underscore the Viet Cong guerrillas' reputation for cruelty.

Asked about the report, Young modified it considerably.

He said "a man who claimed to be working for the CIA" in Vietnam alleged the

intelligence agency had hired some South Vietnamese to masquerade as Viet Cong, adding:

"It was alleged to me that several of these executed two village leaders and raped some women."

He added, "I still don't know, I don't believe such an incident occurred, but I could see how it could have occurred."

He said on returning to Washington from South Vietnam he had asked CIA about the purported incident and had been told the intelligence agency "would not sanction that."